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16 OCT 26 1999 COMMISSIONER STRAND: Thank you very much,
17 and thank the other two speakers afterwards for the slight 18
adjustment in the schedule. My name is John Strand. I'm 19
chair of the Michigan Public Service Commission. I'm
20 testifying today on behalf of the State of Michigan and also
21 on behalf of the National Association of Regulatory Utility
22 Commissioners, which is the organization that represents

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1 utility regulatory commissions in the 50 states and District
2 of Columbia. I served as chair of Nuclear subcommittee on
3 Nuclear Commission and Nuclear Waste. Our primary goal is
4 protect utility ratepayers throughout the country. States
5 and their ratepayers are major stake holders in the matter of
6 disposal of nuclear waste and have followed this matter
7 closely well before the passage of Nuclear Waste Policy Act
8 of 1982.

9 The interests of the states in this matter
10 are quite simple. First, at least 34 states have nuclear
11 power plants, also have spent fuel from those plants stored
12 at reactor sites that were never intended for permanent
13 storage of such materials. In many of those locations, the
14 capacity to store the spent fuel has reached and surpassed
15 the original limits of the facility or will do so in the very
16 near future. Second, the electricity consumers of those
17 states are paying for this program and have committed more 18
than 16 billion dollars into the federal nuclear waste fund 19
to date, 16 billion dollars of ratepayer dollars.

20 Third, nuclear power constitutes
21 approximately 20 percent of the electricity generated in this
1... 22 country. [It is entirely inappropriate and unduly expensive

...1...

1 for the failure of the national waste disposal program to be
2 a primary contributor toward the premature shut down of
3 certain plants. Let me give an example in Michigan, because
4 we are perhaps a microcosm of the state of affairs that
5 exists within this country.

6 In Michigan, there are four nuclear power
7 plants. Each of these plants is located on Great Lakes, the
8 largest fresh water lakes in the world. We have one plant, 9
Big Rock, that is shut down. It is in the face of
10 decommissioning. That cannot be completed until the entire
11 spent nuclear fuel is removed from the site. We have another
12 plant, Palisades, that has been utilizing out of containment
13 dry cask storage since 1988, over one decade. The Palisades
14 plant was one of the first plants in the country to go to dry
15 cask.

16 Michigan's two other nuclear power plants
17 have undergone spent fuel consolidation or reacting within 18
the containment pools. Eventually, these plants will also 19
need to go to dry cask storage. The issue isn't an if but
20 rather when. And I must emphasize, none of these plant sites
21 would ever have been selected for long-term storage of
22 nuclear waste, but unless the Yucca Mountain repository is

1 built and accpets waste for storage, eventually storage at
2 plant sites on Great Lakes will become possible permanent
3 nuclear storage facilities. |

4 We plan to provide more comprehensive
5 written comments by February. Instead, our review and
6 analysis still couldn't be documented provides data and 7
analysis, not just the redesign of the repository, also

8 addresses some of the transportation options of getting the 9
2... material safely and economically. | We feel that DOE has
10 provided useful information for all of the state
11 transportation and public health and safety organizations to
12 consider DOE advances. And while we certainly share many of
13 the concerns regarding transportation, the one point I do
14 want to indicate is that transportation should not be a
15 disqualifier, because if it is, then essentially what will 16
happen is that no site in this country will be qualified. 17
And essentially what will happen is all storage will be on 18
site, including basically the Great Lakes. |

3... 19 | Another analysis that is of primary
20 interest neighbors in the other states is contained in the 21
term of no action alternative. These are clearly
22 unacceptable. If we leave the nuclear waste and storage

1 facilities that were never intended as permanent storage
2 sites, they do not meet the mandate of stated policy of the
3 Nuclear Waste Policy Act to dispose of high-level radioactive
4 waste. Consolidation of spent nuclear fuel at central and
5 single sites are purely for cost effective at the 77
6 particular sites.

7 One no action alternative scenario is
8 exorbitantly extensive and other poses public health risk,
9 while both of them have been attacked as basically being
10 ludicrous. Some other alternative, which is probably just as
11 bad, if not worse, particularly if you figure the
12 alternatives, is storing this on the Great Lakes for 50 or
13 100 years.

14 We recognize in Nevada and citizens in the
15 other 34 states may see it differently, because we see what
16 many in Nevada oppose, but this is not Yucca Mountain. This
17 project should be developed on the basis of sound science,
18 and the Secretary of Energy has stated we believe it makes 19
sense for these reasons. One, the dry climate is favorable; 20
two, geology and hydrologic conditions are right; three,
21 sparse population; four, site is owned and under the control
22 of the federal government; five, past uses of the site make

1 the site unusable for just about any other use.

2 Since the project serves a national purpose,
3 we feel it is important that Nevada, which has not been the
4 direct beneficiary of nuclear power, not bear the undue
5 burden attributed to this project. We feel, therefore, it is
6 important and entirely appropriate that state and local
7 impacts of the project be offset through mitigating measures,
8 financial and otherwise.

9 MR. LAWSON: 30 seconds.

10 COMMISSIONER STRAND: We encourage the DOE
11 to work with the state organizations, State of Nevada, to
12 appropriate areas of federal assistance that can be. In 13
summary, the geologic repository must be built. Yucca
14 Mountain is the best available solution. Draft Environmental
15 Impact Statement is a comprehensive report. Ratepayers have
16 provided 16 billion dollars for this project. And finally,
17 Nevada may not be fully satisfied, but the federal government
18 should continue to provide mitigation for this part in
19 meeting an important national need. That concludes my
20 remarks. Again, I'd like to thank you for the time and thank
21 you for the slight schedule alternative.

22 MR. LAWSON: Thank you. Our next speaker is
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1 Dennis Nester, and Mr. Nester will be followed by Chad Cowan
2 and Kevin Kamps.